

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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NOFORN

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TU, CY

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON TURKISH STANCE TOWARD CYPRUS COMPROMISE

1. ACCORDING TO THE MFA, PRIMIN DEMIREL'S CURRENT POSITION ON A CYP-
RUS COMPROMISE IS THAT UNTIL THE U.S. LIFTS ITS ARMS EMBARGO,
TURKISH CONCESSIONS WILL BE OUT OF THE QUESTION.
HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO REASONS FOR QUESTIONING THE IMMUTA-
BILITY OF THIS POSITION:

A. TURKISH CYPRIOT LEADER DENKTASH REPORTEDLY IS PREPARING
A PROPOSAL ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE (NICOSIA 2483 AND PREVIOUS)
WHICH HE WILL PRESENT TO THE GOT SHORTLY:

B. OPPOSITION LEADER ECEVIT HAS CRITICIZED DEMIREL'S LACK
OF ACTION ON THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND HAS URGED THAT "POLITICAL
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MEANS" BE FOUND TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD AN AGREEMENT DESPITE

THE ARMS EMBARGO.

2. DEMIREL'S PUBLIC POSITION SEEMS CLOSELY RELATED TO DOMESTIC
POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE OCTOBER 12 ELECTIONS FOR ONE-THIRD OF THE SENATE FOLLOW
THE NEW YORK TALKS BETWEEN CLERIDES AND DENKTASH BY ONLY 33 DAYS.
AS A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF DEMIREL'S JUSTICE PARTY TOLD US RECENTLY,
"BETWEEN NOW AND OCTOBER 12, WE WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO THINK OF MUCH
BESIDES DOMESTIC POLITICS". DEMIREL NO DOUBT WILL WANT TO AVOID AS
MUCH AS POSSIBLE ANY RISKY FOREIGN POLICY STEPS DURING THAT PERIOD.
TOP-RANKING MEMBERS OF BOTH MAJOR PARTIES HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY
WOULD PREFER TO CAMPAIGN ON DOMESTIC ISSUES.

B. DEPUTY PRIMER ERBAKAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRO-ISLAMIC
NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY, HAS MADE CLEAR HIS OPPOSITION TO ANY
TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IN CYPRUS. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT IF
DEMIREL AGREED TO SUCH CONCESSIONS BEFORE THE ELECTION, ERBAKAN
WOULD ASSERT THAT HE DID NOT SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY AND WOULD
SEEK TO EXPLOIT THE ISSUE IN THE ELECTION. (IT IS DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER,
THAT ERBAKAN WOULD QUIT THE COALITION OVER THE ISSUE, SINCE BY SO
DOING HE WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE GOVERNMENT JOBS IN WHICH HE HAS BEEN
ABLE TO PLACE A LARGE NUMBER OF HIS SUPPORTERS.)

C. DEMIREL AND HIS PARTY PROBABLY WOULD GAIN VOTES FROM A
LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO IF NO CONCESSIONS BY THE GOT WERE INVOLVED.
IF HE COULD BE ACCUSED OF MAKING CONCESSIONS TO GET THE EMBARGO
LIFTED, HOWEVER, DEMIREL WOULD BE HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO DAMAGING
CRITICISM BY THE RIVAL PARTIES. IN THE LATTER CASE, IT IS POSSIBLE
THAT
HE WOULD LOSE MORE THAN HE WOULD GAIN BY TAKING STEPS TO PROMOTE A
CYPRUS SETTLEMENT AND HELP US GET THE EMBARGO LIFTED.

D. ALSO, EVEN IF HE AUTHORIZED DENKTASH TO OFFER TERRITORIAL
CONCESSIONS IN CYPRUS, DEMIREL WOULD HAVE NO ASSURANCE THAT THE
CONCESSIONS WOULD LEAD TO AN AGREEMENT ON THE CYPRUS DISPUTE OR TO A
LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, OR TO ANYTHING MORE THAN POLITICAL
EMBARRASSMENT.

3. DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE NOT, OF COURSE, THE ONLY
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ONES TO WHICH DEMIREL RESPONDS. HE SEEMS WELL AWARE OF
TURKEY'S IMPERATIVE NEED TO RESOLVE THE ARMS EMBARGO PROBLEM
AND THE ONLY SLIGHTLY LESS URGENT NECESSITY OF SETTLING THE CYPRUS
DISPUTE. BUT AS THE RECENT SIX AND A HALF MONTH GOVERNMENT CRISIS
DEMONSTRATED, POLITICAL INTERESTS WEIGH VERY HEAVILY WITH ALL OF
TURKEY'S POLITICAL PARTIES, AND DEMIREL COULD HARDLY RETAIN HIS
LEADERSHIP OF HIS PARTY IF HE DID NOT PAY CAREFUL HEED TO HIS PARTY'S
INTERESTS.

4. DEMIREL WOULD THUS SEEM TO FACE SEVERAL OPTIONS REGARDING THE TURKISH STANCE IN THE NEXT CLERIDES-DENKTASH TALKS:

A. SEEK TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION OF THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE UNTIL AFTER THE OCTOBER 12 ELECTIONS, EMPHASIZING MEANWHILE THE NEED FOR AGREEMENT ON INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS (SEPTTEL);

B. LET DENKTASH TAKE A POSITION IN THE UPCOMING TALKS THAT WOULD BE EXPERIMENTAL AND SUBJECT TO LATER CONFIRMATION (OR DISAVOWAL)
BY THE GOT;

C. AUTHORIZE DENKTASH TO SENSASSA COMPROMISE ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE;

D. COUPLE (C) WITH THE PROVISIO THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY AGREEMENT WOULD BE CONTINGENT ON THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO;

E. SEEK TO ISOLATE OR SILENCE ERBAKAN BY ARRANGING FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT BY PRESIDENT KORUTURK AND TURKISH GENERAL STAFF CHIEF SANCAR (IN THIS REGARD, SUPPORT BY ECEVIT WOULD OF COURSE BE MOST HELPFUL; HOWEVER, ONE OF ECEVIT'S PRINCIPAL ASSISTANTS RECENTLY TOLD US THAT THE PARTY REMAINED UNWILLING TO HELP IN THIS WAY, BECAUSE IT WOULD MEAN "A COLITION WITHOUT A COALITION").

5. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.S. ACTION FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.
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